

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 12249 071739Z

43 L

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 EUR-25 ISO-00 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 SIL-01 LAB-06 EB-11 SS-20 NSC-10

DRC-01 /130 W

----- 057564

R 071650Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1709

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 12249

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: AORG, ILO, ELAB

WUBJECT: ELECTION ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL

DEPT PASS COMMERCE AND LABOR

REF: CARACAS 9326 AND 9345

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ROME 12249 071739Z

BEGIN SUMMARY

1. GOI FORMALLY SUPPORTS FRANCIS BLANCHARD (FRANCE) AS EUROPEAN CANDIDATE FOR ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL. HOWEVER, FOREIGN OFFICE QUESTIONS WHETHER WESTERN EUROPEAN CAN BE ELECTED. VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CALDERA CONSIDERED BEST PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE WHO COULD GAIN WIDE SUPPORT DEVELOPING NATIONS AS WELL AS AMONG WESTERN INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

2. LABATT DISCUSSED WITH RESPONSIBLE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL (FALCHI) ITALIAN VIEWS ON SELECTION OF ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL TO SUCCEED JENKS.

3. ITALY HAS NOW BEEN APPROACHED BY FRANCE WITH REQUEST THAT ITALIANS SUPPORT CANDIDACY FRANCIS BLANCHARD TO BE ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL. ITALIAN RESPONSE WAS TO OFFICIALLY VIEW BLANCHARD POSITIVELY AND SUPPORT HIM IN PRINCIPLE AS THE EUROPEAN CANDIDATE. ITALIAN SUPPORT, HOWEVER, PRO FORMA ONLY AS GESTURE OF EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY, AND IN FACT, GOI IN DOUBT THAT SUPPORT CAN BE MUSTERED FOR ANOTHER DIRECTOR GENERAL FROM A WESTERN INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRY. PERSONAL VIEW (IN CONFIDENCE) OF MINISTER FALCHI IS THAT BLANCHARD WHILE TECHNICALLY CAPABLE DOES NOT HAVE REPUTATION OR PRESTIGE OF WHICH THE ILO IN NEED.

4. OTHER ANNOUNCED CANDIDATE TEVOEDJRE (DAHOMY) CONSIDERED WEAK. SOMETIME CANDIDATE ARTURO MUNOZ-LEDO (MEXICO) ALSO UNSUITABLE.

5. GOI CONSIDERS BEST POSSIBLE CANDIDATE TO BE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT RAFAEL CALDERA, IF CALDERA WIL BE "FULL TIME" DIRECTOR GENERAL.

CALDERA WOULD BRING TO ILO THE PRESTIGE OF HIS OFFICE AND, IN ITALIAN VIEW, WOULD AS A LATIN AMERICAN REPRESENT A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE INDUSTRIALIZED WESTERN COUNTRIES AND THE UNDER-DEVELOPED WORLD--SOMETHING AN AFRICAN OR ASIAN CANDIDATE COULD NOT DO. THIS CONCEPT OF BRIDGE, HOWEVER, SEEMS CLEARLY CONTINGENT ON US VIEW OF CALDERA CANDIDACY.

6. ITALIAN SCENARIO FOR ELECTION DIRECTOR GENERAL IS TO GIVE ABBAS AMMAR FULL POWER AS ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR APPROXIMATELY A SIX-MONTH PERIOD. ITALIAN DELEGATE AGO UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO MAKE NO FINAL COMMITMENT TO BLANCHARD AT NOVEMBER GOVERNING BODY MEETING
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PAGE 03 ROME 12249 071739Z

ALTHOUGH BLANCHARD REMAINS FORMALLY BLESSED. INSTEAD AGO IS TO FEEL THE COLLECTIVE PULSE AND DETERMINE IF CANDIDACY CALDERA OR OTHER SUITABLE NON-EUROPEAN (PREFERABLY LATIN AMERICAN) IS LIVING REALITY. AT FEBRUARY/MARCH MEETING THE GB SHOULD FINALLY AGREE ON A CANDIDATE WHO COULD BE CONFIRMED THERE OR BY THE GB IN JUNE PRIOR TO THE ILO CONFERENCE. ITALIAN POSITION IS THAT GB SHOULD CONFIRM NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL BEFORE ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN ORDER TO PREVENT CONFERENCE BECOMING INVOLVED IN ELECTION PROCEDURE THUS OPENING

PANDORA'S BOX.

6. FOREIGN OFFICE MOST INTERESTED US VIEWS ON ELECTION DIRECTOR
GENERAL, ESPECIALLY CANDIDATE OF OUR CHOICE. VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NOMINATION, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973ROME12249
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731149/aaaabkbb.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: CARACAS 9326 AND 9345
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17-Sep-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <21-Nov-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ELECTION: ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL
TAGS: AORG, ELAB, ILO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005